

10-5-2006

October 5, 2006

Council on Academic Affairs

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Agenda for the October 5, 2006 CAA Meeting

Item approved: 06-82, Record Retention for Academic Materials (Proposed Statement)

Items Pending: 06-52, MIS 4530, Web Application Development (New Course)
06-76, Failing Grade for Non-Attendance (New Grade)
06-78, Policy on Review of Capricious Grading, Forms, and Flowchart (New Policy to Replace IGP 45: Grades Appeals)
06-81, Admission Requirement for Transfer Students (Revised Requirement)
06-83, Dean's List, Honor's List, and Provost's List (Proposed Revisions)

Council on Academic Affairs

Minutes

October 5, 2006

The October 5, 2006 meeting of the Council on Academic Affairs was held at 2:05 p.m. in Booth Library Conference Room 4440.

Members present: Dr. Bower, Dr. Carwell, Ms. Dilworth, Mr. Feimer, Ms. Green, Dr. Hyder, Dr. Melvin, Dr. Roszkowski, Ms. Sommerfeld, and Dr. Stowell.

Members absent: Dr. Dietz, Mr. Mitchell, and Dr. Upadhyay.

Staff present: Dr. Lord, Dr. Herrington-Perry, and Ms. Fopay.

Guests present: Dr. Haile Mariam, Faculty Senate & Psychology; Dr. Hooser, COTE & Special Education; Mr. Kenealy, *Daily Eastern News*; and Ms. Major, Admissions Office.

I. Approval of the September 21, 2006 Meeting Minutes.

The minutes of September 21, 2006 were approved as written.

II. Communications:

a.) College Curriculum Committee Meeting Minutes:

1. Minutes from the September 22, 2006 College of Sciences Curriculum Committee meeting.
2. Minutes from the September 25, 2006 College of Education & Professional Studies Curriculum Committee meeting.

The agenda order was changed. The communications relating to the Policy on Review of Capricious Grading were discussed later in the meeting (See page two of these minutes.)

III. Committee Reports:

None.

IV. Item Added to the Agenda:

1. 06-83, Dean's List, Honor's List, and Provost's List (Proposed Revisions)

Dr. Bower moved and Ms. Dilworth seconded the motion to add this item to the agenda.

V. Items Acted Upon:

1. 06-81, Admission Requirement for Transfer Students (Revised Requirement)

Ms. Major presented the proposal and answered questions of the council. The council requested that Ms. Major submit catalog copy showing how the proposal will be incorporated into the existing catalog text. Dr. Herrington-Perry and Ms. Major will prepare and submit the catalog copy to the council prior to next week's meeting. No action was taken on the agenda item today.

2. 06-82, Record Retention for Academic Materials (Proposed Statement)

Provost Lord and Dr. Herrington-Perry presented the proposal and answered questions of the council.

Ms. Dilworth moved and Dr. Hyder seconded the motion to approve the proposal. The motion passed unanimously.

The proposal (See Attachment A) was approved, as soon as possible, pending CGS and the President's Council approval.

3. 06-78, Policy on Review of Capricious Grading, Forms, and Flowchart (New Policy to Replace IGP 45: Grades Appeals)

The following communications were included on this week's CAA agenda. All of these communications relate to the Policy on Review of Capricious Grading (Agenda Item 06-78).

1. September 26, 2006 email from Dr. John Kilgore, English.
2. September 27, 2006 email from Dr. Lucia Schroeder, Early Childhood, Elementary and Middle Level Education.
3. September 28, 2006 email from Dr. William Addison, Psychology.
4. September 28, 2006 email from Dr. Newton Key, History.
5. September 28, 2006 email from Dr. Christy Hooser, Special Education.
6. September 28, 2006 email from Dr. Charles Delman, Mathematics.
7. September 28, 2006 email from Dr. David Carpenter, English.
8. September 28, 2006 memorandum from Dr. Mary Herrington-Perry summarizing issues raised at the September 28, 2006 CAA/CGS Forum.
9. Summary of the 9/28/06 CAA/CGS Forum.

Additional communications were submitted after the CAA agenda was posted.

1. October 5, 2006 email submitted to the CAA listserv from Dr. Julie Dietz (See Attachment B.)
2. October 5, 2006 email submitted to the CAA listserv from Dr. Mukti Upadhyay (See Attachment C.)
3. October 5, 2006 memorandum from Dr. Kathlene Shank (See Attachment D.) Dr. Roszkowski distributed copies of this communication to the council members at today's meeting.

Dr. Christy Hooser submitted an email to the council on September 28, 2006 (See Attachment E.) She was unable to attend the 9/28/06 CAA/CGS Forum to explain her email. As a result, she attended today's meeting to explain her concerns about the proposed Policy on Review of Capricious Grading and the impact she thought it might have on COTE and Eastern's teacher education policy. In addition, she answered council members' questions.

The council members discussed the Policy on Review of Capricious Grading, Forms, and Flowchart; issues that came up at last week's CAA/CGS Forum; and the concerns that were pointed out in the various communications submitted to CAA and CGS. Dr. Haile Mariam participated in this discussion.

Following the discussion, the Council decided that the proposed policy should be sent back to the Grade Appeals Ad Hoc Committee with a request that it consider the following issues:

- Whether the term "capricious" should be used in the policy;
- Whether the term "substantial" in the following sentence should be clarified/defined: "The assignment of a grade by a substantial departure from the faculty member's previously announced standards." (Number four on page one of the proposed policy);
- Whether the proposed deadline of the 10th day for a student to submit a grade appeal should be increased;
- Whether the department chair should have a more active role in the grade appeal process;
- Whether the fact-finding function should be kept at a department level committee;
- Whether Unit B faculty should be precluded from serving on committee(s) in the process;
- Whether the University Grade Review Board is necessary; and
- Whether the student representative should be an ex-officio member on any committee that determines whether a grade should be changed.

Dr. Carwell moved and Dr. Stowell seconded the motion to table agenda item 06-78 until the council receives a new recommendation from the Grade Appeals Ad Hoc Committee.

VI. Follow-up to the September 21, 2006 CAA meeting:

1. At the September 21, 2006 CAA meeting there was a question about who approved waiver 06-30 on the August College of Education & Professional Studies waiver report. Today Dr. Roszkowski reported that Dr. Jonelle DePetro, Chair of the Philosophy Department, and Dean Johnson, CAH, approved the waiver.

VII. Pending:

1. 06-52, MIS 4530, Web Application Development (New Course)
2. 06-76, Failing Grade for Non-Attendance (New Grade)

The next meeting will be held Thursday, October 12, 2006.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

--Minutes prepared by Janet Fopay, Recording Secretary

The current agenda and all CAA council minutes are available on the web at <http://www.eiu.edu/~eiucaa/>. In addition, an electronic course library is available at <http://www.edu.edu/~eiucaa/elibrary/>.

The CAA minutes, agendas, and summaries of CAA actions are distributed via a listserv, caa-list. To subscribe, go to the following web site: <http://lists.eiu.edu/mailman/listinfo/caa-list>. Locate the section "Subscribing to caa-list" and enter your email address and create a password. Next, click on the subscribe box. An email will be sent to you requesting confirmation. Once confirmation is received, your request will be held for approval by the list administrator. You will be notified of the administrator's decision by email.

***** ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING *****
Thursday, October 12, 2006
Arcola/Tuscola Room, University Union @ 2:00 p.m.

Agenda:

1. 06-76, Failing Grade for Non-Attendance (New Grade)
2. 06-81, Admission Requirement for Transfer Students (Revised Requirement)
3. 06-83, Dean's List, Honor's List, and Provost's List (Proposed Revisions)

Pending:

1. 06-52, MIS 4530, Web Application Development (New Course)
2. 06-78, Policy on Review of Capricious Grading, Forms, and Flowchart (New Policy to Replace IGP 45: Grades Appeals)

Approved Executive Actions:

None.

Pending Executive Actions:

None.

Attachment A

EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF THE PROVOST AND VICE PRESIDENT
FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Blair M. Lord
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Phone - 581-2121
Email - blord@eiu.edu

TO: Christie Roszkowski, Chair, CAA
Kathleen O'Rourke, Chair, CGS

RE: Record Retention for Academic Materials

DATE: September 15, 2006

By way of background sometime ago, the University had a citation in an audit report concerning the absence of a policy pertaining to the retention of student materials which form the basis of course grades. As you may know, the State has very elaborate record retention policies that apply to business documents and other materials generated at the University. It turns out, however, that there is no such policy or statement anywhere in our official documents including our internal governing policies pertaining to graded work.

To address this oversight, I have attached a proposed statement that would address this. I believe it would be most appropriate as an addition to the IGP #46, Grades. The basic premise is simply that materials not returned to students need to be retained for a sufficient period of time such that if a student question is received regarding the assignment of a grade that the materials on which the grade was based that were retained by the faculty member will be available to help in forming the response. This may be another item where a joint meeting of CAA and CGS would be appropriate, but I will leave that decision to the chairs.

BML/ksj
Attachment

Record Retention for Academic Materials.

Record Retention for Academic Materials. Instructors shall keep accurate records of all marks which are used in determining a student's grade and shall retain such records for at least one academic year from the date on which the grade was submitted. Instructional staff members who are going on leave or who are leaving the employ of the University shall deposit copies of such grading records in departmental (or college) offices.

All papers, exams, reports, etc., submitted by students in fulfillment of course requirements and not returned to students also shall be subject to these provisions. Unless informed otherwise in writing, students shall normally have the right to examine such exams and papers, etc., under conditions and stipulations determined by the course instructor.

Attachment B

From: caa-list-bounces@lists.eiu.edu on behalf of Julie Dietz [jcdietz@eiu.edu]
Sent: Thursday, October 05, 2006 9:48 AM
To: caa-list@lists.eiu.edu
Subject: [Caa-list] CAA

Christie, members of CAA, and the CAA listserv:

I just got a call from my son's carpool driver, who has had a family emergency, so I have to drive up to Urbana this afternoon to pick up my son after school.

I did want to share my thoughts about the grade appeal revision, however, even though I will not be able to be there today.

I've read all the communications about the proposed policy, and had numerous other conversations about it, as well.

Aside from dealing with the word "capricious," I think there are three key issues to consider:

1. The role of the chair.
2. Unit B faculty.
3. How the policy will interact with Teacher Ed and their programmatic appeal process.

In terms of the Chair role, I think a more "active" role should be delineated. I think that is what your group really envisioned – active mediation. But it comes across in the documentation as if the chair is little more than a record keeper. I wonder about more closely paralleling what is done with waiver requests. The Chair must sign off on them, and either support or not support the request. I think it would be useful to have an indication from the departmental level as to whether or not this grade appeal request has grounds. The chair could indicate whether or not there are, in his or her opinion, legitimate grounds for a grade appeal. The Departmental level committee has been removed in the revised process. Why not replace that with an indication from the chair about the legitimacy of the appeal request?

I'm more concerned about the lack of Unit B representation issue. While I understand the committee's concerns because Unit B faculty are not contractually obligated to perform service, it is a reality that Unit B faculty are intimately involved in the grade appeal process. The courses with the greatest number of appeals, I suspect, are likely to be Gen Ed courses, especially those which are both required and have required minimum grades (ENG 1001 and 1002, and CMN 1310 come to mind). A significant number of the sections of those courses are taught by Unit B faculty, and they are far more vulnerable to all the issues which swirl around grade appeals than a tenured or even a tenure-track faculty person is. I've been contacted by a few Unit B faculty from a variety of departments with horrific stories of their experiences with grade appeals, especially in instances where there is no assurance of Unit B representation on the convened Grade Appeals Committee.

We have been focused on protecting students, and we need to do that, but we also need to afford faculty appropriate protection, as well,

I hadn't even thought about the issues Dr. Hooser raised in reference to Teacher Education programs. I would like to have a better understanding about the issues unique to that population that need to be considered before final policy language is approved.

Also, I've encountered a strong sense of surprise that we are moving on this so quickly. Several people who were at the joint meeting last week (including myself) were under the impression that the phrase "will be discussing this in the future" meant a bit further into the future than October 5! I wonder if we need more time before we approve something.

Sorry I won't be with you this afternoon, but there is no one else who can get my son after school. See you next week.

Julie Dietz

~~~~~  
Julie C. T. Dietz, Ph.D.  
Professor  
Community Health Advisor  
Department of Health Studies  
Eastern Illinois University  
600 W. Lincoln  
Charleston, IL 61920  
[jcdietz@eiu.edu](mailto:jcdietz@eiu.edu)  
~~~~~

Attachment

From: caa-list-bounces@lists.eiu.edu on behalf of Mukti Upadhyay [mpupadhyay@eiu.edu]

Sent: Thursday, October 05, 2006 10:13 AM

To: To facilitate the distribution of CAA agendas and minutes, and the discussion of CAA issues

Subject: Re: [Caa-list] 10/5/06 CAA Agenda

Sorry, Christie, I will not be able to attend today's meeting. Some urgent work.

Reviewed the capricious grade discussion last week and the email from several faculty included in today's agenda. I find myself sharing the concern of some who say adding layers of bureaucracy in a way that will make it more common and acceptable to question the judgment of a faculty in grade assignment may not be a wise move. I do not know the marginal benefit the school will get from spending so many resources to tackle an issue for which current procedures already do a decent enough job. Contrast the 80000+ grade assignments per year with the puny grade complaints that are actually made as described by a student representative last week.

Thanks,
Mukti

Attachment D

To: Dr. Christie Roszkowski, Chair, Council on Academic Affairs
Dr. Kathleen O'Rourke, Chair, Council on Graduate Studies

Re: Proposed "Policy on Review Of Alleged Capricious Grades", draft dated July 18, 2006

From: Kathlene S. Shank, Professor and Chair

Date: October 5, 2006

As a faculty member and Chair I have significant concerns with the proposed "Policy on Review of Alleged Capricious Grades".

The first of these concerns is with the title. "Alleged Capricious" implies that there is intent to be "capricious". Among the synonyms for "capricious" one finds these words in a thesaurus: impulsive, unpredictable, whimsical, variable, unreliable, fickle, and erratic.

I also believe that instead of replacing the current policy, which was approved by the President on May 2, 2004, with the proposed policy that the current policy should be modified. Replacing a policy that is 3.75 pages long with a 4.25 page policy that requires another 10 pages of explanation which includes two new sets of procedures, four new forms, and a flowchart to be followed in the grade appeal process will not result, in my professional judgment, in a process that is more fair to either a student or a faculty person. In fact, in my opinion, if this proposed policy is put in place the number of grade appeals will increase significantly, the tenor will be more litigious and the time and energy spent on the process and procedures will be increased significantly without gain. I also believe because the process is so language cumbersome that grades will end of being changed most frequently due to procedural issues when in fact the grade assigned was the grade earned and should stand.

Another significant issue is that there is no provision in the proposed policy that an entity determines that the grade appeal aligns to any of the four bases specified. The Chair or a Department Grade Appeal Committee should make the determination that the appeal is indeed based on one of the four provided bases before the process should proceed.

Another issue I have with the proposed process is that it eliminates the Department Grade Appeal Committee and replaces it with a College level committee. When the current policy was being proposed it was widely discussed across campus across more than one semester. One of the proposals in 2003-2004 was to have a College level committee and the campus community did not support this thus the revised policy approved in 2004 specified a Department committee not a College level committee. I think we need to honor the thorough process that was used in arriving at the current policy and that the College committee, if the proposed policy is to be revised rather than revising the current existing policy, should be eliminated and the Department Committee should be reinserted. Department faculties understand their discipline and the standards of the discipline; cultures of departments and disciplines are diverse and this diversity is our strength as a University. A Department Committee that determines a grade should be changed has more discipline specific integrity than does a College level committee.

For the same reasons given for why I do not support a College Committee I also do not support a University level committee. One committee at the Department level sending its findings to the Dean or Provost assures integrity of the process.

The current policy works for the most part, if it needs tweaking then let's tweak it. If we need language that allows for someone other than an instructor to change a grade in situations where there is truly culpability than let's add it BUT let's not set ourselves up for increasing number of grade appeals and a faculty level committee changing another faculty member's grades.

Grades are given in courses that have Department prefixes not a University prefix, changing a grade should be something that happens only when one of the four bases is proven to have occurred and should remain the purview of the instructor unless a grade has truly been found by the Department Grade Appeal Committee, the Department Chair, and/or College Dean to have been assigned in an impulsive, whimsical, unreliable, fickle, or erratic way which was decidedly unfair to the student and/or puts the University in legal jeopardy.

If the bottom line issue is that when an instructor has truly given a student a grade that fits one of the four bases for an appeal that the current policy does not provide for anyone other than the instructor to change the grade then add language that in essence states "If in the judgment of the Dean the University could be determined to be culpable if the grade is not changed as recommended by the Department Chair, the Department Grade Appeal Committee, and/or the Dean the Dean may direct the Chair to change the grade in question." I believe our University Council, Joseph Barron, should be called upon to formulate this language and this should be added to the current "Grade Appeals" policy.

In closing I hope that this proposed policy will not be acted upon in haste, I hope all input will be given serious and due consideration, and I hope we will keep firmly in mind that a grade appeal process is not designed to provide a vehicle to question a faculty member's judgment in assessing the quality of the student's work. We must avoid any process or policy that gives an appearance of doing so. I think the proposed policy gives this appearance.

Attachment E

From: Hooser, Christy
Sent: Thursday, September 28, 2006 10:55 AM
To: Roszkowski, Christie
Subject: Concerns about the proposed grade appeal policy
Christie,

Attached are my comments about the proposed changes to the grade appeal policy.

Christy

Comments on the Proposed Changes to the Grade Appeal Policy

In reading the proposed policy on "Alleged and Capricious Grading", I have several major concerns as a faculty member and as a member of COTE. As a faculty member, my first concern is over the title of the proposed policy. The title of the proposed policy is inflammatory and implies faculty error before the process is initiated.

Another major concern I have as a faculty member is the proposed policy takes away my ownership of a grade I assigned based on what a student has earned and places it in the hands of individuals at a college and university level who are unfamiliar with my discipline and have no contextual information that resulted in the grade earned. Consequently, a student who is sitting at 89% or 79% or 69% who does not like his/her grade can easily file under one of the existing reasons for appealing a grade. As the existing reasons for a grade appeal can encompass a broad range of interpretations, the CGAC and UGRB can decide to over turn the grade, I as a faculty member have little to no say. If the rationale for this policy is based on cases where faculty members truly did not change a grade that should be changed, then let the Department Chair and Dean of the College make the final determination to change the grade.

In addition, the Department Chair should be given the opportunity to determine whether the grade appeal is viable based on the criteria set forth in the grade appeal document. Why is this decision made at the college level? The grade is not assigned at the college level but at the departmental level.

As a member of COTE, I also have major concerns this proposed policy will have on teacher education candidates and existing teacher education policy at EIU. Teacher education candidates have to meet certain cumulative grade point requirements to continue in their teacher preparation program. Moreover, candidates have to meet standards specific to SPA (Specialty Professional Association) and Unit (NCATE) assessments. An overturning of a grade may also be overturning of a decision made about how a candidate is performing to standards. Therefore, a candidate who would not be selected to move on in their program is now able to do so. This decision is not made by COTE who governs teacher education policy on this campus, but by individuals who may or may not have anything to do with teacher education. Consequently, the number of student appeals coming to COTE will increase. In this case, the student appeal would not be about a grade, but about being allowed to bypass existing teacher education policy. So for those of us in teacher education, the proposed policy does not just impact a grade change, but also can result in a deviation from teacher education policy.

I would suggest that CAA/CGS consider making changes to the existing policy that results in solutions to problems that the proposed policy is designed to remediate. In the end, all I see happening with the proposed policy is an increase in time and energy, increased grade appeals, and an increase in grade inflation so faculty members can avoid the process all together.